

Nothing To Say

Elbows

I remember
the time Jack,
young & sure,
came to us
& wisely began:

you can tell
a woman's
age
by her
elbows.

Well
right then
& there
we felt his
gospel truth
enter us

& those
over 30
put on our
coats
not to leave
but because
it was
suddenly colder.

All day long
I have looked for that
one line
as if in finding it
all the salvations
and holy joes
would have reason
to rejoice,
and old
sexless
women
would lay like
brown dogs
under the sun
turning golden.
But this is not
the way of the world.
Not one line
or five hundred books
will give us
relief.
We seem doomed
to worry and dry up
and smell like fish
in the market.
The strongest force
in us
is without control.
Ah, my dears
my dears
all this time
and we are still
amateurs.

Buying My First Original Painting

Hanging on a bank wall, mind you,
where money is put behind cages
and heavy metal doors, where security
is inserted into tricky wires
and cameras wait
to avenge the hungry thief,
there is my painting ... nothing anyone
else might care for; heavy brown frame

and California Poppies
bursting inside of it by an old abandoned
railroad tie.
And I think: christ woman! where have your
senses gone?
The price isn't high for someone with plenty
of money to spend.
To me, I might as well buy a Picasso
or a Vincent Price special at Sears.
But my god, it does speak out to me.
I keep returning to view it, studying
like an art student for the professor's test.
I call the artist, already feeling
important with something I can't handle.
I know from the first hesitant
reaction the price will go down.
The vendors in Mexico have been more
reluctant. The open flea markets
have shown more terror. I am a fat,
golden winner.
Sometimes the days are so glorious
there is nothing left to say.
I move through the hours and the thin
margin of my existence
flat as a virgin running towards
her raper.

GUY

Guy has a twitch
in his busy right eye

he also leers at women
in the classroom

22 & 1/2 years
of army life

now he teaches
sociology

Guy tells us jokes
in between lectures

& leers & goes home
at night
feeling splendid about
the world

these are my notes